

Remarks on the Keystone XL Pipeline Project

March 24, 2017

The President. Thank you very much for being here this morning. Today I'm pleased to announce the official approval of the Presidential permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline. TransCanada will finally be allowed to complete this long-overdue project with efficiency and with speed. We're working out the final details as we speak. It's going to be an incredible pipeline, greatest technology known to man or woman. And frankly, we're very proud of it.

Russ Girling, President of TransCanada, is right behind me, and I'm going to have him say a few words. I know, Russ, you've been waiting for a long, long time. And I hope you don't pay your consultants anything, because they had nothing to do with the approval. [*Laughter*] In fact, you should ask for the hundreds of millions of dollars back that you paid them because they didn't do a damned thing except get a no vote, right?

It's a great day for American jobs and a historic moment for North American and energy independence. This announcement is part of a new era of American energy policy that will lower costs for American families—and very significantly—reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and create thousands of jobs right here in America. And I also would like to add, I think it's a lot safer to have pipelines than to use other forms of transportation for your product.

When completed, the Keystone XL pipeline will span 900 miles—wow—and have the capacity to deliver more than 800,000 barrels of oil per day to the Gulf Coast refineries. That's some big pipeline.

The fact is that this \$8 billion investment in American energy was delayed for so long, it demonstrates how our Government has too often failed its citizens and companies over the past long period of time. Today we begin to make things right and to do things right. Today we take one more step in putting the jobs, wages, and economic security of American citizens first. Put America first.

As the Keystone XL pipeline now moves forward, this is just the first of many energy and infrastructure projects that my administration will approve—and we've already approved a couple of other big ones, very, very big ones, which we'll be announcing soon—in order to help put Americans back to work, grow our economy, and rebuild our Nation.

And with that, I'd like to invite Russ to say a few words. Russ is a very highly respected man in the energy world. He's president of TransCanada. And I know you'll do a fantastic job, Russ, and get it up and hire plenty of American people.

Thank you. Russ?

TransCanada President and Chief Executive Officer Russell K. Girling. Thank you, Mr. President. And this is a very, very important day for us, for our company. So on behalf of thousands of people that have worked very hard to get here—as you've pointed out, very long time to get here—but we're very relieved and very much just want to get to work.

Some of those folks I have with me today: the building trades with Sean McGarvey; some of our—construction contractor, Quanta; our pipe suppliers from Welspun. There's thousands of people that are just ready and itching to get to work. We've got a lot of work to do in the field, but as you pointed out, this is the safest and most reliable way to move our products to

market. We're going to use the best technology. It will create thousands of jobs and tax—important tax revenues in local communities.

That's something often that's overlooked in new projects like this, is local communities benefit greatly from these projects. It gives them tax revenues in which they can invest in schools, hospitals, roads, teachers, nurses—all of those things—build the fabric of communities and make those places better for those folks to live.

So again, thank you very much for this opportunity, and we're not going to let you down, sir.

The President. Well, thank you, Russ. And I know the voters appreciate this. Some of them expressed it very, very strongly. The workers definitely appreciated it. The building trades' heads didn't, but now maybe they're going to start to. Where are my building trades guys? I think they're going to start to, because other people were not going to be signing this bill. That I can tell you. And if it ever did get done, it would be years. But I don't think it would have ever gotten done.

So we put a lot of people to work, a lot of great workers to work, and they did appreciate it. And they appreciated it, Russ, very much at the polls, as you probably noticed. And so we're very happy about it.

So the bottom line: Keystone finished. They're going to start construction when?

Mr. Girling. Well, we've got some work to do in Nebraska to get our permits there——

The President. Nebraska.

Mr. Girling. ——so we're looking forward to working through that local——

The President. I'll call Nebraska. [*Laughter*] You know why? Nebraska has a great Governor. They have a great Governor so——

Mr. Girling. Yes. We've been working there for some time, and I do believe that we'll get through that process. But obviously, we have to engage with local landowners, Tribal communities. So we'll be reaching out to those over the coming months to get the other necessary permits that we need, and then we look forward to start construction.

The President. Okay. I'm sure Nebraska will be good. Peter is a fantastic Governor who's done a great job, and I'll call him today.

So thank you all very much. Appreciate it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:30 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. J. Peter Ricketts of Nebraska. Mr. Girling referred to Sean McGarvey, president, North America's Building Trades Unions.

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